

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 DAMASC 01355 091724Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06  
EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 /072 W  
-----035970 100757Z /23  
R 091521Z MAR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7151  
INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1355

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PGOV IN SY PDIP  
SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ASSAD VISIT TO INDIA; NEW SYRIAN AMBASSADOR  
TO INDIA

REF: NEW DELHI 3612

1. PRESIDENT ASSAD WILL PAY OFFICIAL VISIT TO INDIA  
COMMENCING EITHER 22 OR 23 MARCH, ACCORDING TO INDIAN  
AMBASSADOR. PROGRAM INCLUDES THREE DAYS IN NEW DELHI  
AND TWO TO THREE DAYS OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL.
  2. SYRIANS ARE INTERESTED, AMBASSADOR STATES, IN EXPLORING  
USE OF INDIAN EXPERTS ON VARIOUS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.  
IN THIS CONNECTION, THEY HAVE ALREADY DISCUSSED INDIAN  
INVOLVEMENT IN SYRIAN PLANNING FOR FERTILIZER  
(PHOSPHATE) INDUSTRY.
  3. WE HAVE NO RECORD OF OFFICIAL VISIT TO SYRIA BY  
INDIAN PRESIDENT AND ASSUME THIS WILL BE FIRST MEETING AT CHIEF  
OF STATE LEVEL. ONLY SENIOR INDIAN OFFICIAL TO VISIT  
SYRIA RECENTLY WAS MINISTER OF INDUSTRY FERNANDES.
  4. TO HELP PREPARE FOR VISIT, ASSAD HAS JUST SENT  
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- DEPUTY FONMIN ABDULLAH AL-KHANI AS NEW AMBASSADOR TO  
DELHI. WE UNDERSTAND POST VACANT FOR PAST SEVERAL  
MONTHS. AL-KHANI PLANNED ARRIVE AT POST MARCH 5.
5. AL-KHANI IS EXPERIENCED SYRIAN DIPLOMAT. HE HAS  
SPENT THE BULK OF HIS CAREER IN DAMASCUS, BROKEN BY  
BRIEF TOURS IN ANKARA, BRUSSELS AND LONDON. BEFORE HIS

APPOINTMENT AS DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER IN 1976, HE SERVED AS MINISTER OF TOURISM. HE SPEAKS ENGLISH FLUENTLY. A MEMBER OF AN OLD DAMASCENE FAMILY, "ABDULLAH BEY," AS HE IS FAMILIARLY KNOWN, EXUDES AIR OF ANCIEN REGIME GRACIOUSNESS. HE IS NOT A MEMBER OF THE RULING BAATH PARTY.

6. AL-KHANI PRESENTS HIS GOVERNMENT'S POLICIES LUCIDLY, OFTEN SMOOTHING AWAY THEIR ROUGHER EDGES. HE IS PERSONALLY WELL ACQUAINTED WITH SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIALS RESPONSIBLE FOR US/NE RELATIONS. HE PARTICIPATED IN CERTAIN MEETINGS BETWEEN AL-ASSAD AND SECRETARY VANCE AND ACCOMPANIED AL-ASSAD TO HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT CARTER IN GENEVA LAST MAY. THE OUTWARD APPEARANCE OF TOTAL SELF-CONTROL AND SUAVITY MASKS A PASSIONATE COMMITMENT TO THE ARAB CAUSE AND DEEP DISTRESS OVER SADAT'S INITIATIVES. HE IS, NEVERTHELESS, CAPABLE OF DETACHMENT AND OF A DEGREE OF HUMOR SUCH AS HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE UNITED STATES AS "AN IMPERIALIST POWER IN THE PROCESS OF EVOLUTION."

7. MARRIED WITH TWO TEENAGE DAUGHTERS, AL-KHANI TRAVELLED ALONE TO NEW DELHI. BECAUSE OF EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS, HE ANTICIPATES HIS FAMILY MAY NOT JOIN HIM AT POST. IN LAST CONVERSATION WITH US, HE STRONGLY HINTED HE DID NOT EXPECT TO REMAIN TOO LONG IN INDIA.  
MURPHY  
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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** CHIEF OF STATE VISITS, AMBASSADORS, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Review Event:**  
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**Subject:** POSSIBLE ASSAD VISIT TO INDIA; NEW SYRIAN AMBASSADOR TO INDIA  
**TAGS:** PGOV, PDIP, IN, SY, (AL-ASSAD, HAFIZ), (AL-KHANI, ABDULLAH)  
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